on a plan evolved much earlier, but the procurement process was given an impetus as a result of "OP VIJAY", India's Defence budget has been increasing year after year in order to strengthen/modernize the country's Defence. The allocation for the Armed Forces for the year 2000-2001 has been considerably increased from Rs. 48,504 crores during the year 1999-2000 to Rs. 58,587 crores resulting an increase of 21% over the last financial year, keeping in view the emerging needs of Defence preparedness. A substantial portion of the Defence budget is earmarked for equipping the Defence Services with modernized weapons and weapon systems. The funds earmarked for capital modernization during the current year is Rs. 15,980.56 crores which is 27% of the total budget as against Rs. 11,009.76 crores (23% of the total budget) during the last Financial Year.

Weapons recovered/seized by the army in North-Eastern Region

332. PROF. M.M. AGARWAL: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state: -

(a) the details of weapons recovered/seized by the Army and other security forces in North-Eastern Region of the country during the last two years, year-wise and the mode adopted for their use/ disposal;

(b) the steps taken to ensure proper control of these weapons and to check their misuse;

(c) whether any investigation has been conducted as to how such weapons are finding their way to these States; and

(d) if so, the outcome thereof?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) The Army/Assam Rifles recovered/seized 955 assorted weapons including 528 country made guns and 597 assorted weapons including 264 country made guns, respectively, during the period July 1998-July 1999 and July 1999- July 2000 (upto July 20) from various terrorist outfits in the, North-Eastern Region. All the weapons recovered, except in Nagaland, have been handed over to the Police as per law. In Nagaland, owing to the ongoing Cease-fire and the existence of Ground Rules and Monitoring Mechanism, a total of 104 weapons recovered from NSCN(I/M) have been retained by Army/Assam Rifles in consultation with the Cease-fire Monitoring Group. The details of weapons recovered by CPOs/State Police forces are being ascertained and will be made available.

(b) Detailed instructions have been issued to all concerned to ensure that the

weapons recovered are handed over alongwith the FIR to the Police. Details with regard to further disposal of these weapons by the State Police are being ascertained from the State Governments.

(c) and (d) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Pilotless Aircraft supplied to Air Force, Navy and Army

333. SHRI BACHANI LEKHRAJ: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) the number of indigenous pilotless aircraft supplied to the Indian Air Force, the Navy and the Army, separately;

(b) the names of the manufacturing units; and

(c) the number of such aircraft manufactured by each unit?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) The Lakshya Unmanned Air Vehicle (UAV) for Aerial Target Practice is in Limited Series Production (LSP) based on indigenous development. Orders have been placed for 5 systems each by the Army, Navy and Air Force. Orders for the Air Force and the Navy are under completion; the Army order is likely to be completed by April 2001.

(b) and (c) The responsibility for Limited Series Production vests with the Aeronautical Development Establishment of DRDO which works closely with Hindustan Aeronautics Limited, Bangalore which is the identified agency for serial production. Several firms in the private and public sector supply Lakshya sub-systems.

Shortage of Army Officers

† 334. SHRI BACHANI LEKHRAJ: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that shortage of army officers is being felt in the country;

(b) if so, whether Government are going to take any steps to cover-up this shortage; and

(c) if so, the details thereof; and if not, the reasons therefor?

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.